

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KHARTO 02243 01 OF 02 061140Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----068754 061157Z /47

R 061103Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4791
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 2243

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, MPOL, SU, EG
SUBJECT: RELATIONS BETWEEN NIMEIRI AND SADAT

REF: A. KHARTOUM 2221, B. CAIRO 11102

1. SUMMARY. CONCERNS BY SADAT AND OTHERS IN CAIRO OVER WEAKNESS NIMEIRI REGIME UNDERSTANDABLE BUT STRIKE US AS UNDULY GLOOMY. NIMEIRI HAS MADE MAJOR EFFORT OVER PAST YEAR TO IMPROVE SECURITY. UNFORTUNATELY HIS EFFORTS SECURE ARMS FROM US, FRANCE, CHINA AND OTHERS HAVE SO FAR MET ONLY WITH LIMITED SUCCESS. NIMEIRI HAS ALSO MOVED TO ASSURE ALLEGIANCE OF ARMY AND TO NEUTRALIZE OPPOSITION, IN BOTH CASES, APPARENTLY WITH SOME SUCCESS. WHILE THREAT OF ATTEMPTED COUP, ESPECIALLY BY COMMUNISTS, IS EVER PRESENT, OVERALL INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION APPEARS BETTER NOW THAN YEAR OR SO AGO.
END SUMMARY.

2. WE FOUND CAIRO'S EXPLANATION OF SADAT'S CURRENT IMPATIENCE WITH NIMEIRI INTERESTING BUT ALSO SURPRISING. WE WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO KNOW PRECISELY (A) WHY SADAT BELIEVES NIMEIRI HAS NOT TAKEN ADEQUATE MEASURES TO PRE-EMPT LIBYAN ATTACK AND (B) ON WHAT BASIS NON-RESIDENT DIPLOMATS BELIEVE COUP IS LIKELY HERE IN NEAR FUTURE. PROBLEM IS BOTH

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ALLEGATIONS MAY BE CORRECT, BUT WITHOUT KNOWING THEIR BASIS WE WONDER IF THEY REPRESENT CONSIDERED ANALYSIS OF SITUATION IN SUDAN.

3. RE PREPAREDNESS, SADAT'S REMARKS ARE SURPRISING, SINCE CONSTANT THEME OVER PAST YEAR HAS BEEN NEED TO IMPROVE SECURITY IN FACE NOT ONLY OF LIBYAN THREAT BUT BECAUSE OF

FEAR OF COMBINED LIBYAN/ETHIOPIAN/SOVIET EFFORT TO OVERTHROW FIRST NIMEIRI AND THEN SADAT. SUDANESE BELIEVE THEY ARE MAKING AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO IMPROVE SECURITY. IN ADDITION TO STEPS TAKEN TO ASSURE ALLEGIANCE OF ARMY AND NEUTRALIZE OPPOSITION, NIMEIRI HAS ENTERED INTO FORMAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT AND INFORMAL PACT WITH SAUDI ARABIA. WHEN HE PERCEIVED LOCAL SOVIET ADVISORS AS THREAT HE KICKED THEM OUT OF SUDAN.

4. NIMEIRI HAS MADE MAJOR EFFORT SECURE ARMS FROM US, FRANCE, CHINA AND OTHERS, AND OVERALL DEFENSE BUDGET HAS BEEN INCREASED BY 50 PERCENT. UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM, HOWEVER, RESPONSE HAS BEEN AGONIZINGLY SLOW AND LIMITED WITH ONLY CHINESE PROMISING TO GIVE AND NOT SIMPLY TO SELL ARMS. BUT CHINESE SIMPLY DO NOT MAKE OR CANNOT PROVIDE FULL RANGE OF EQUIPMENT NIMEIRI NEEDS. SUDANESE LEADERSHIP WOULD LIKE US TO BE KEY COUNTRY HELPING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SECURITY. HOWEVER, DESPITE OUR POLICY DECISION TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH SUDAN, SO FAR AT LEAST, ONLY MILITARY EQUIPMENT WE HAVE AGREED TO SELL IS C-130 TRANSPORTS.

5. PERHAPS SADAT BELIEVES NIMEIRI HAS CONCENTRATED TOO MUCH ON EASTERN FRONTIER. IT TRUE THAT SINCE LAST DECEMBER PROBLEMS ALONG ETHIOPIAN BORDER HAVE TAKEN FIRST PRIORITY. THIS NECESSARY FROM SUDANESE POINT OF VIEW, HOWEVER, SINCE ETHIOPIA REPRESENTS GREATER THREAT. BORDER REGION IS

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CLOSER TO KHARTOUM, IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL REGIONS OF SUDAN AND STRATEGIC PORT SUDAN AREA. IT ALSO MORE HEAVILY POPULATED THAN WESTERN REGION. IT IS AS THOUGH US HAD TO FACE CONCURRENT THREATS FROM NORTH CENTRAL MEXICO AND ONTARIO. BOTH WOULD BE SERIOUS, BUT LATTER CLEARLY IS WORSE. SHOULD ALSO BE KEPT IN MIND THAT SUDAN HIS HUGE COUNTRY WITH MANY WEAK, UNSTABLE OR ERRATIC NEIGHBORS AND, CONSIDERING LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES, ALL BORDERS CANNOT BE DEFENDED FULLY. AS RESULT, SUDANGOV TENS BE AS UN-PROVOCATIVE AS POSSIBLE.

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4792
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 2243

EXDIS

6. AS FOR PREDICTIONS OF COUP, WE THINK THIS A LITTLE
LIKE PREDICTING WAR IN MIDDLE EAST. EVENTUALLY YOU WILL
BE RIGHT. HOWEVER, BASED ON ALL INFO AVAILABLE TO US, WE
THINK SECURITY SITUATION AS GOOD AS IT HAS BEEN IN PAST
YEAR. NIMEIRI STILL DOES NOT HAVE FULL AFFECTION OF
SUDANESE, BUT NEITHER DOES ANYONE ELSE. DURING PAST YEAR
HE HAS WORKED HARD AND WITH SOME SUCCESS TO GAIN FULL BACKING
OF ARMY. HE IS MOVING TO NEUTRALIZE OPPOSITION. APPARENTLY
WITH SOME SUCCESS. ON OTHER HAND, OBVIOUS COMMUNIST BACKING
OF LIBYA AND ETHIOPIA HAS TENDED DISCREDIT THOSE MEMBERS
NONCOMMUNIST SUDANESE OPPOSITION WHO HAVE BEEN COOPERATING WITH
FOREIGNERS AGAINST NIMEIRI REGIME. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS PERSIST
AS DO POCKETS OF TRIBAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST, BUT
WE KNOW OF NO IMPORTANT CONCERTED EFFORT REKINDLE CIVIL WAR
AMONG SOUTHERNERS. SUDANGOV REMAINS WARY OF THOSE WHO
ATTEMPTED MOUNT COUP LAST JULY, AND MANY LOCAL OBSERVERS
ASSUME COMMUNISTS WILL MOVE AGAINST GOVERNMENT AT FIRST
OPPORTUNITY. BUT IN LOCAL TERMS, SECURITY SITUATION IS
BETTER THAN IT HAS BEEN IN SOME TIME. THOUGH WE WOULD NOT
BE SURPRISED IF COUP WERE ATTEMPTED, AT MOST ANY TIME, WE
THINK CHANCES OF SUCCESSFUL COUP LESS NOW THAN YEAR OR TWO
AGO.

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